MEDIA RELEASE

HERITAGE OTTAWA SUPPORTS STRONGER MEASURES TO SAVE SOMERSET HOUSE

OTTAWA, ON, September 18, 2018 – Heritage Ottawa welcomes the City of Ottawa's decision to take strong action against the ongoing deterioration of Somerset House. Located at the corner of Bank and Somerset streets, the former grand landmark now stands as the city's most egregious example of demolition by neglect.

Heritage Ottawa's ongoing efforts to encourage the preservation of this designated heritage property date back to 2007, soon after the building's untimely collapse. That work continued through the years of unsuccessful efforts and incentives on the part of the City to encourage the owner, Tony Shahrasebi, to rehabilitate the property.

Court Curry, Manager of Right of Way, Heritage and Urban Design Services, announced last Thursday at the meeting of the City's Built Heritage Sub-Committee (BHSC) that he no longer believes that Mr. Shahrasebi intends on continuing with his previously presented plans to restore and rehabilitate the building.

At the BHSC meeting, Councillor Wilkinson recommended that the City undertake remediation of the building deficiencies resulting from the property owner's neglect, and charge the cost back to the property taxes. Councillor McKenney recommended that should the owner fail to rehabilitate the historic building, the City should consider expropriation.

Heritage Ottawa strongly supports these recommendations – both of which Ottawa City Council has the power to enforce under the *Ontario Municipal Act*.

We urge all concerned citizens to join Heritage Ottawa in supporting stronger action by the City to prevent any further deterioration of Somerset House.

CONTACT:
David Flemming, Heritage Ottawa, via **info@heritageottawa.org**

ABOUT HERITAGE OTTAWA
Heritage Ottawa champions the protection and stewardship of Ottawa's built heritage and cultural places, celebrating their value in enriching our shared environment.